

Bedford Housing Partnership
April 16, 2015

Present: Irma Carter, Jean Hammond, Ellis Kriesberg, Kate Moskos, Lisa Mustapich, Jane Puffer, Kristopher Washington, Christina Wilgren
Others present: Jessica Porter, Assistant Town Manager; Beth Rust, RHSO ; Mark Siegenthaler, Selectman
Absent: Alice Sun, Mike Rosenberg

Note: Mark Siegenthaler will be replacing Mike Rosenberg as Liaison to Board of Selectmen

Kriesberg called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Minutes: February 26, 2015

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes with small edits.

VOTE: Unanimous in favor.

HOME/RHSO

Housing and Production Plan

Beth Rust reported on a recent MAPC meeting (also attended by Selectman Bill Moonan). Towns are required to produce a Housing and Production Plan and generally rely on agencies like MAPC to do the preparation - cost about \$25K. Bedford is already beyond 10% - it is not clear what we would need (or get) for such a sum. General consensus that we would wait for action/direction from Board of Selectmen.

RHSO is planning another Home Owner Training Program, May 20 in Concord. This free information session is aimed at owners of affordable condo owners. Session will cover legal issues, financial management of condominium associations, property management, maintenance, insurance, etc. It is being offered to new condo owners in our seven member towns. Rust noted that 32 have already signed up - 4 are from Bedford. The last program was well received.

A regional roundtable meeting is also scheduled for June 18 at Harvey Wheeler auditorium in West Concord for the seven member towns – group invitees include local planning boards, housing authorities, town housing committees, e.g. trusts, historic districts, etc. Rust noted that this might be a good opportunity for the BHP to get some input on how other towns handle their per unit subsidy. Susan Connolly, Director of Community Housing, Mass Housing Partnership is the featured speaker.

Rust also expected that the RHSO's new website – RHSOhousing.org - would be operational by May 4. It will serve as a link to 47 housing sites in the seven member towns and will provide one stop information on housing opportunities, services, and links to contacts and documents in the member towns – It will have information on resale, improvements, fuel assistance, foreclosure assistance, units for sale, regulations – promises to be a great resource for someone seeking housing as well as a potential time saver for office staff.

Rust also presented an interesting use of HOME funds by the City of Waltham. BHP previously discussed possible temporary subsidy programs for emergency housing. Rust explained that Waltham offers a program that covers first month's rent and security deposit. HOME regs state that the apartment rent has to be below market rent –and budget \$3K per grant. RHSO could set it up (but not administer) much like the small grant program. We get about \$12K per year from HOME – this would allow us to help 4 families - \$3K per family. Members preferred not to use the grant for a security deposit – who would get the deposit back when the tenant left? Waltham gives it to the tenant. BHP preferred to have it returned for use with another grant but recognized that maintaining those records could be cumbersome. BHP members opted for the grant to be for the first and last month's rent –this would eliminate any bookkeeping – it would be a one time grant. The unit would have to pass Board of Health standards. Members were interested in pursuing. Selectmen would have to approve since it is a HOME program - Town Counsel would have to

check the wording. Members also discussed possible problems – who would be eligible? Could it be limited to Bedford? Members liked that it could be a way to address housing emergencies and were interested in pursuing. Landlord would have to agree to use the HOME Program Lease addendum as part of their lease - lease agreement would have to be for one year.

MOVED: Mustapich moved – Wilgren seconded –To recommend to the Selectmen that we use our HOME funds for a two year period to cover first and last month's rent for a tenant using local eligibility in a unit located in Bedford. VOTE: Unanimous in favor.

Updates on Developments:

Porter reported that there was no news about the Coast Guard. Weather /snow delayed the appraisal. She thought that the appraisal had been done but has not had confirmation from the CG.

The lottery for the two units at The Crossing will be June 23.

Mustapich reported that the South Road Condos were before the Planning Board. They will come before the BHP. It might end up as a 30B.

BHA – Life Management classes are going forward. There are educational opportunities through MCC and UMass Lowell. The next meeting will be March 12 – Seven families are taking advantage of the sessions. Three are from Elm Street, Four have BHA vouchers. Other housing authorities are interested.

Fair Housing: No issues

Election of officers:

As directed in the Town Charter, committees are to reorganize at the first meeting after the Town Election
The following “slate” was nominated and seconded:

Chair: Kate Moskos

Vice Chair: Ellis Kriesberg

Clerk: Lisa Mustapich

VOTE: Unanimous in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10pm

Recorded: Irma Carter

Approved May 19, 2015